



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF  
CALIFORNIA  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
OF THE COURTS  
Public Information Office  
455 Golden Gate Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688  
[www.courtinfo.ca.gov](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov)

415-865-7740

Lynn Holton  
Public Information Officer

# NEWS RELEASE

Release Number: 63

Release Date: August 25, 2006

## Judicial Council Approves New Standards To Improve State Court Collections

***Millions of dollars uncollected in state courts; new program  
designed to promote respect for court orders and rule of law***

San Francisco—In an action that could amount to millions of dollars in revenue for the state, trial courts, and county governments, the Judicial Council of California today approved statewide standards and guidelines that will improve the collections of fines, fees, forfeitures, and penalties imposed by trial courts.

“An improved statewide system of collections will promote respect for the justice system and the rule of law,” said Chief Justice Ronald M. George, chair of the 28-member Judicial Council, the policymaking body for the state courts. “When court orders and penalties are ignored, the public’s respect for the judicial branch is diminished and funds are lost that could be used to improve services for the public.”

By a unanimous vote, the council approved the final recommendations of a report by the Collaborative Court-County Working Group on Enhanced Collections that will lead to improved court collections throughout the state. The council report is available on the California Courts Web site at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/jc/documents/reports/082506item5.pdf>.

The actions result from Senate Bill 940 (Stats 2003, ch. 275; Escutia), Judicial Council–sponsored legislation that requires the council to adopt comprehensive collection standards statewide for trial courts and counties.

### **Courthouse Funding Requests Approved**

In other action, the council approved submission of a funding request of approximately \$1.3 billion for fiscal year 2007–2008 for nine new courthouse projects. Appropriations will be requested from both the State Court Facilities Construction Fund and the state’s General Fund. The

(over)

proposed courthouse projects are:

- Calaveras County: New San Andreas Court
- Lassen County: New Susanville Court
- Los Angeles County: New Long Beach Court
- Madera County: New Madera Court
- Riverside County: New Riverside Mid-County Region Court
- San Benito County: New Hollister Court
- San Bernardino County: New San Bernardino Court
- San Joaquin County: New Stockton Court
- Tulare County: New Porterville Court

This funding request is based on a new, simplified policy for prioritizing major trial court building projects that focuses on the main goals of the Judicial Council's court facility improvement program, including the need to improve courthouse security, reduce overcrowding, improve the physical condition of facilities, and expand access to court services.

The new policy was based on input from a statewide task force and court facilities panel, as well as comments from court leaders throughout the state.

### **Council Approves Trial Court Budget Requests**

By a unanimous vote, the council approved the fiscal year 2007–2008 trial court budget request for submission to the Governor and Legislature next month. The request will include 100 additional judgeships and staff over the next two years; funding to address trial court security costs; a state appropriations limit base adjustment; and funding to expand the Assigned Judges Program. In other action, the council:

- Approved new and revised funding standards for trial court security in the areas of professional staff support, security services and supplies, and vehicle use. The standards will affect the security funding courts will receive.
- Approved trial court funding allocations for fiscal year 2006–2007, including state appropriations limit adjustment funding; funding for Judicial Council budget priorities; security funding carried over from last fiscal year; and savings in the Judicial Branch Workers Compensation Program from FY 2005–2006.
- New funding for security and judgeships separately provided in the 2006 Budget Act, as well as funding for under-resourced courts, will be considered by the Judicial Council at its October business meeting.

*The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.*

#